(b) if so, the measures taken by Government to get rid of them;

(c) whether it is also a fact that 80 per cent of Jharkhand's coal production area is under mafia stronghold; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) No, Sir. Coal India Limited (CIL) is not in the grip of mafia rule and corruption. Coal India has its own Rules and Procedures for running the operations of the company and a proper management system is in place. However, at times, it is experienced that during the process of tendering for procurement of services such as transport of coal / over burden removal and other works which are done through contractors, adequate response from prospective bidders is not received, probably out of fear from some people or groups of people. As such, re-tendering in some of the cases has to be resorted to.

It has also been experienced that after the award of the contract, the new contractors in some of the coalfields are not able to complete the work and sometimes leave the works half done probably due to fear from some people or group of people.

(b) Coal companies are taking all steps as per the existing rules. The following steps are being taken by utilizing the latest technology and practices:

i) Taking steps towards e-procurement.

ii) e-payment to contractors and suppliers.

iii) Sale of coal through e-auction.

iv) Placing NIT on website.

v) Using reverse e-auction in tenders for supply of explosives.

vi) The coal companies also interact with State Governments to deal with the above situations leading to law and order problems.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, production in Jharkhand has been affected due to bandhs called by the naxalites, Maoist groups, or other such groups of people.

Coal gasification

†2631. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to promote coal gasification;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some foreign companies have sought permission to start their business by using the technique of converting coal into oil;

(d) if so, the details of such proposals; and

(c) whether above proposals have been considered by Government and if so, the details thereof?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to facilitate allotment of coal blocks to potential entrepreneurs a Gazette Notification has been issued in July 2007 notifying the production of syngas obtained through coal gasification (underground and surface) and coal liquefaction as end uses for the purposes of Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act 1973. Guidelines for undertaking Underground Coal Gasification has also been published.

(c) to (e) Government has notified coal liquefaction as one of the end uses as mentioned in reply to part (a) & (b) above. Further, Government has allotted two coal blocks in Talcher coalfields, Orissa, one each to M/s Strategic Energy Technology Systems Ltd. (SETL) a joint venture of M/s. Tata Steel and M/s. SASOL of South Africa and M/s Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. (JSPL). Each Coal-to-Liquid project is likely to produce 80,000 barrels per day (bbl/day) of oil and oil products, as per the proposals submitted by them.

Cross-border merger of companies

2632. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to review cross border mergers of the companies as reported in the Financial Express dated 3 June, 2009;

(b) the manner in which it is likely to affect the Indian companies;

(c) the steps being initiated to amend the Companies Act in this regard; and

(d) by when it is likely to be put in practice?

THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) to (d) The News Item titled "Govt. reviews ban on cross-border mergers" was published on 3rd June 2009 in the daily edition of Financial Express. The Companies Bill, 2009, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 3rd August, 2009, *inter-alia* provide for merger or amalgamation between registered companies under the proposed legislation and companies incorporated in the jurisdiction of such other countries, as notified from time to time by the Central Government, by mutual agreement. Hence, a foreign company may merge or amalgamate into an Indian company or *vice-versa*. The Bill has been referred to the Parliament Standing Committee on Finance for examination and report. It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government, may by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint, after it is passed by the Parliament and receives the assent of the President of India.

Under reporting of profits by Telecom operators

2633. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has received complaints against some telecom operators for fudging of accounts and under-reporting of profits;